



United States Department of Interior
1005 Selway Drive

Bureau of Land Management

Dillon Field Office
Dillon, Montana 59725

Contact: Marilyn Krause
Phone: (406) 533-7617
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Drought Reduces Livestock Numbers on BLM Land

DILLON – The sixth year of drought in southwest Montana has forced livestock producers and the Bureau of Land Management to temporarily reduce livestock numbers permitted to graze within the Dillon Field Office. “The cooperation from permittees was outstanding and all temporary reductions were completed through agreements,” stated Pat Fosse, Supervisory Range Specialist for the Dillon office.

Livestock operators south and west of Dillon were asked to apply for only up to 60% of their authorized use and operators north and east of Dillon were asked to apply for up to 80% of their authorized use. “These are tough times for livestock operators,” said Tim Bozorth, Dillon Field Manager. “At BLM we want to thank our local permittees for their cooperation and willingness to do what is right for rangeland health.”

Southwest Montana welcomed the recent rain and snow but much more is needed to counter the effects of a six year drought. The permittees’ cooperation in implementing temporary grazing reductions is a vital and much appreciated component of maintaining the long-term health of public rangelands. “In many cases, these temporary reductions caused hardship to the permittees, however they generally agreed that the reductions were necessary and BLM sincerely appreciates the outstanding cooperation of permittees during difficult times,” commented Fosse.